MARVEL

2

BUNN
SANDOVAL
ARIZMENDI
ARCINIEGA

ABSOLUTE CARNAGE

SCREAM

YEARS AGO, THE LIFE FOUNDATION–A DANGEROUS CONGLOMERATE THAT, FOR A TIME, FOCUSED ITS EFFORTS ON DESTROYING SPIDER-MAN–CAPTURED THE VENOM SYMBIOTE AND FORCED IT TO SPAWN FIVE OFFSPRING: SCREAM, LASHER, RIOT, AGONY AND PHAGE.

DONNA DIEGO WAS THE ORIGINAL HOST TO THE SCREAM SYMBIOTE BEFORE HER MURDER AT THE HANDS OF EDDIE BROCK. THE CALL OF KNULL—THE SYMBIOTE GOD—WAS TOO STRONG TO KEEP THE SCREAM SYMBIOTE BURIED, AS IT AROSE FROM ITS SHALLOW GRAVE WITH THE BODY OF DONNA DIEGO TO FOLLOW KNULL'S BIDDING.

PATRICIA ROBERTSON, THE FORMER HOST TO THE MANIA SYMBIOTE, HAS BEEN BIDING HER TIME FOR THIS EXACT MOMENT, BUT ALL OF HER TRAINING COULDN'T STOP THE INEVITABLE, AS THE SCREAM SYMBIOTE ABANDONED DIEGO'S CORPSE AND BONDED TO PATRICIA!

BEING CONTROLLED BY THE SPIRAL OF KNULL, SCREAM IS NOW HUNTING ANOTHER PREVIOUS MANIA SYMBIOTE HOST—ANDI BENTON!

ABSOLUTE CARNAGE

SCREAM

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ANDI BENTON MUST DIE.

AND SHE IS--

MINE!

--TO KILL.

SHE IS--

MINE.

BRING HER.

BRING YOUR OWN SELF TO ME.

AND I'LL CLAIM YOU BOTH.

DO IT FOR ME.

DO IT--

"--NOW!"

THE HOST-FLESH WANTED THE GIRL.

THE HOST-FLESH WANTED *REVENGE.*

BUT THIS IS NOT ABOUT VENGEANCE.

THIS IS ABOUT A *TITHE.*

CARNAGE DEMANDS AN OFFERING.

AND WE WILL GIVE HIM WHAT HE WANTS.

AAGGHH!

SLLLSH

WE WILL *ENJOY* OURSELVES WHILE PERFORMING OUR SACRED TASK.

YEEAARGH!

BURNS!

IT... HURTS!

WE CAN'T!

YOU WILL!

FOR ME!

YOU MUST!

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STAN'S SOAPBOX

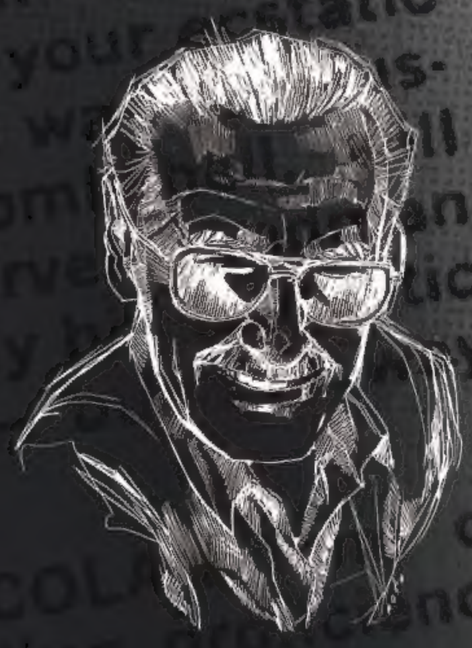
For many years we've been trying, in our own bumbling way, to illustrate that love is a far greater force, a far greater power than hate. Now we don't mean you're expected to go around like a pirouetting Pollyanna, tossing posies at everyone who passes by, but we do want to make a point. Let's consider three men: Buddha, Christ, and Moses . . . men of peace, whose thoughts and deeds have influenced countless millions throughout the ages — and whose presence still is felt in every corner of the earth. Buddha, Christ, and Moses . . . men of good will, men of tolerance, and especially men of love. Now, consider the practitioners of hate who have sullied the pages of history. Who still venerates their words? Where is homage still paid to their memory? What banners still are raised to their cause? The power of love — and the power of hate. Which is most truly enduring? When you tend to despair . . . let the answer sustain you.

Excelsior!

Smiley

GRAINGER, North Carolina . . . our pal SAL BUSCEMA, Virginia; while Jaunty J. STERANKO and Joltin' J. CRAIG both have their pads in Pennsylvania . . . Torrid TOM SUTTON, Massachusetts . . . JIM (Madman) MOONEY, Connecticut . . . and Valiant VINCE COLLETTA, Jumpin' JOHNNY SEVERIN, and Genial GENE COLAN, all nesting in New Jersey! The rest of us share the same high taxes and traffic jams in New York and Long Island — darn it! (And we never DID find out where Honest Irv holes up!)

Now, before cutting out, we've just gotta tell you about Jolly SOLLY BRODSKY. A few days ago he announced that he, stunned the children were finally



STAN LEE
FOREVER

I WANT WHAT'S MINE!

ONCE YOU BRING ME TO HIM, WHAT DO YOU THINK HE'LL DO TO YOU?

CARNAGE IS *USING* YOU!

HE WANTS TO STRIP EVERY TRACE OF SYMBIOTE FROM MY FLESH!

NUUH!

SHOKT

THOK

KRAK

THROK

THROK

NO!

LET GO!

THP

FLPH

THP

GET OFF ME!

YEAAAARGH!

WE WERE DEAD!

DEAD!

NNNNN--

BUT GOD RAISED ME UP!

THE RESURRECTION HAS A PRICE!

WE WERE--

--ALIVE.

WHO ARE YOU?

N-NOT DEAD.

I'M STILL... ALIVE.

TH-THIS IS NOT ME.

TOO MANY...

...VOICES...

...TOO MANY...

...NOT MINE...

DIG THEM OUT!

YEEARRGH!

HNN!

SPLUT

H-HEY.

ARE YOU--

LOOK WHAT THEY DID TO ME!

LOOK WHAT I'VE BECOME!

I DIDN'T WANT THIS!

I DIDN'T--

YOU HAVE TO BELIEVE ME.

I SWEAR.

I DIDN'T.

I DID.

WE DID.

WE ARE SCREAM.

LOOK...NO OFFENSE, SCREAM...

...I DON'T MEAN TO BELITTLE WHATEVER PERSONAL CATHARSIS YOU'RE GOING THROUGH...

...BUT ARE YOU STILL TRYING TO KILL ME OR WHAT?

I'VE DONE MY RESEARCH. I'VE NEVER MET HER, BUT I KNOW HER JUST THE SAME.

ANDI BENTON.

SHE WAS MANIA.

SHE WAS THE HOST TO MY SYMBIOTE AFTER IT WAS TAKEN FROM ME.

NO.

THAT WASN'T ME.

I WASN'T IN CONTROL.

THAT SYMBOL-- FORCED ME TO ATTACK YOU.

YEAH.
THAT TRACKS.
WELL--
FWOOOSH
I DON'T KNOW IF THAT WILL DO ANY GOOD.
THE SPIRAL WASN'T JUST THERE ON THE WALL.
IT'S PART OF ME.
IT MIGHT APPEAR AGAIN.
THEN WE'D BEST HOPE YOU CAN FIGHT IT OFF AGAIN.
EITHER THAT OR I CAN ROAST YOU WHERE YOU STAND.
WHAT'S HAPPENING?
TO ME... TO THE CITY.
WHY IS THIS HAPPENING?

WHY?

THE ANSWER MIGHT BE AS SIMPLE AS CARNAGE IS OUT OF CONTROL.

BUT IT'S REALLY MORE COMPLICATED THAN THAT.

I DON'T FULLY UNDERSTAND IT MYSELF, BUT I'VE PUT TOGETHER BITS AND PIECES.

CARNAGE SEES HIMSELF AS SOME SORT OF PROPHET OR HOLY MAN...AND WHATEVER GOD HE'S WORSHIPPING DEMANDS ***SACRIFICE.***

HE'S ATTACKING ***ANYONE*** WHO WAS EVER BONDED TO A SYMBIOTE--HARVESTING LEFTOVER ALIEN DNA FROM THEIR CELLS.

THESE DAYS, THERE ARE ***A LOT*** OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE BONDED WITH SYMBIOTES.

HE CAME FOR ME.

AND HE WOULD HAVE KILLED ME, TOO, IF NOT FOR THIS ***HELL-MARK*** OF MINE.

I GUESS HE'S STILL TRYING TO FINISH THE JOB.

HE'S UNLEASHED AN ARMY OF MONSTERS ON THE CITY.

I CAME HERE TO HELP...BUT I MIGHT BE TOO LATE.

CARNAGE IS GROWING ***STRONGER*** BY THE SECOND.

AND I DON'T KNOW IF ANYONE CAN STOP HIM.

AND I...

...WE...

...ARE JUST ANOTHER ONE OF HIS MONSTERS.

MAYBE SO.

BUT IT LOOKS LIKE YOU'VE FOUGHT OFF HIS INFLUENCE.

THAT MEANS SOMETHING.

I KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT FIGHTING OFF DARK IMPULSES.

SO, WE RESIST HIM.

AND NOW?

NOW WHAT?

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO--

HEY!

FWP-

THP-

WHAT THE HELL DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?

LET ME--

YOU'RE NOT GOING TO TELL US TO LET YOU GO, ARE YOU?

IF WE WERE YOU, WE'D THINK THAT ONE THROUGH.

WE'RE NOT GOING TO HURT YOU.

BUT WE MUST DECIDE WHAT TO DO WITH YOU.

I'LL TELL YOU WHAT YOU'RE NOT GOING TO DO AGAIN!

YOU'RE NOT GONNA GRAB ME AND DRAG ME OFF ON ANOTHER AERIAL JAUNT THROUGH THE CITY!

NOT COOL, LADY!

CARNAGE WANTS YOU.

MAYBE WE SHOULD KEEP YOU AWAY FROM HIM.

DENYING CARNAGE THE THING HE WANTS... THAT HAS TO BE A GOOD THING, RIGHT?

OR--

YEAAAAAAAGGH!

"--WE TAKE THE FIGHT TO HIM!"

N-NO! STAY BACK!

OH GOD!

KEEP AWAY FROM US!

HSSSSSSSSSSS!

P-PLEASE--

SLLLL

LGGK

WE'LL GIVE YOU A CHOICE.

JUST ONE.

JUST ONE CHANCE.

YOU CAN FIGHT US...

...OR YOU CAN FIGHT *HIM.*

HSSSSS!

FIGHT HIM!

YOU CAN RESIST HIM!

RESIST-- LIKE WE DID!

YEAAARRRGH!

HKRRSSK

DIDN'T THINK SO.

CARNAGE'S MINIONS.

HIS DOPPELGANGERS.

SLASH

THEY AREN'T MINDLESS.

THERE ARE HOSTS WITHIN THE SYMBIOTES.

BUT THEY ARE CRUEL AND VICIOUS AND VILE.

THEY SURRENDER THEMSELVES WILLINGLY TO THE URGES OF THEIR MASTER.

THEY ARE COMPLICIT.

SGHONK

SHUNK

SHANK

WE ARE NOT LIKE THEM.

WE ARE MORE THAN HOST-FLESH AND SYMBIOTE.

FLOOD OOOOOOOH

WE TOLD YOU TO STAY PUT.

YEAH, WELL, I HAVE A LONG HISTORY OF BEING TOLD TO STAY PUT.

AND AN ***EQUALLY*** LONG HISTORY OF NOT DOING WHAT I'M TOLD.

LIKE IT OR NOT, THIS IS MY FIGHT TOO.

WE SHOULD HIDE YOU.

WE SHOULD KEEP YOU FAR AWAY FROM CARNAGE.

HE CAN'T HURT YOU IF HE CAN'T FIND YOU.

IF WE HAD JUST GONE INTO HIDING--

--THEY'D BE ***DEAD.***

M-MORE MONSTERS!

STAY AWAY!

TH-THEY'RE GOING TO KILL US!

HEY! NO! HEY!

IT'S ALL RIGHT!

I'M JUST A GIRL WITH A FEW *DEMONIC GIFTS!*

ONLY *ONE* OF US IS A MONSTER...AND SHE'S ON OUR SIDE!

NNNRGG!

ARE...

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

SCREAM?

RUN!

FIGHT HIM!

YOU CAN HOLD HIM OFF!

YOU'VE DONE IT BEFORE!

JUST-- FIGHT!

YOU D-DON'T UNDERSTAND!

HIS INFLUENCE IS SO MUCH STRONGER!

HE'S CLOSE!

HE'S--

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SO SORRY!

DID I INTERRUPT SOMETHING?

WERE YOU LADIES GOSSIPING?

THIS IS ABOUT A TITHE.

CARNAGE DEMANDS AN OFFERING.

AND WE WILL GIVE HIM WHAT HE WANTS.

UNLESS WE STOP HIM.

ANDI BENTON... MUST SURVIVE.

TO BE CONTINUED...

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Hello, in here, out there, around the world and aboard all the ships at sea!

AT LAST! ABSOLUTE CARNAGE #1 is on sale NOW (today, in fact!), and we can finally show the world what Donny Cates and Ryan Stegman and the whole team here at VENOM HQ have been working on since January!

Within hours of the book being on sale, letters started coming in, and it seems like you readers out there in Mighty Marveldom are enjoying things so far!

But don't take my word for it; let's hear from YOU!

Dear ABSOLUTE CARNAGE creative team,

I don't normally pick up comics from my local comic shop on the first day of release, but with ABSOLUTE CARNAGE on the horizon, I decided to take the leap. And I'm darn glad that I did. I was cautious at first on the whole thing being this oversized, overhyped event, but all of you really killed it, and it is worth the recognition!

I absolutely love your art, Mr. Stegman. The expressions of your characters are flawless. One of the things I appreciated in your writing, Mr. Cates, was the despair and desperation within Eddie Brock doing whatever it takes to protect his son, Dylan. The subtle references are great too, like to the former hosts and my particular favorite. The callback to WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #18, in which Eddie pushes Peter onto the train tracks.

I'm starting college very soon for an art profession, and these comics are going to be a part of my life through it all. I also just recently purchased some of your artwork, Mr. Stegman.

Anyway, I cannot wait for the rest of the series and where it will lead. Proud to call myself a fellow Venomaniac, and as always...Carnage Rules!

Excelsior,
Dominic

And we're so proud to have you as a Venomaniac, Dominic! Thanks for reading and for taking the leap to go to your local shop!

You should DEFINITELY go to your local shop every Wednesday--not only because you're more likely to get rarer variants if you get to your shop early, but also because there are few places as great as a comic shop on a Wednesday!

PLUS: Shops can be a great way to meet new people! I went to college a few states away from where I grew up, and it wasn't until I was a sophomore that I decided to try to find the nearest comic book shop. AND NOTHING WAS EVER THE SAME. My local shop offered a discount club for readers with pull lists, game nights and special sales that you'd only know about by being a regular (shout-out to 4th World Comics on Long Island!)!

It's also preeetty much the only ironclad way to avoid spoilers online! I love technology, but the best way to read comics is in print from a shop the day they come out!

Dear VENOM Team,

ABSOLUTE CARNAGE was an awesome book to read, and I'm so happy with all the work and time you put into it to get it right. Donny, the writing you do for VENOM is so fun to read and always has me on the edge of my seat. Ryan, I love taking the time after reading a page to enjoy your art and look at all the detail you put in. I'm so eager to see how things turn out and how characters develop throughout your run, and I definitely hope for more Venomous events.

Thanks again Devin, Nick and everyone for making this happen!

From RI,
Hunter T.

I didn't allow ANY OF THIS, HUNTER! The Venom train is just a force of nature that can't be stopped!

Kidding aside, the person you should be thanking is yourself--and everyone who's been going to the shops month in, month out and picking up VENOM and WEB OF VENOM.

The best way to tell everyone here at Marvel which books you like is with your dollars, and VENOM is no exception!

Plus: This editing gig keeps a roof over my head--so, in all seriousness, THANK YOU!

Hi ABSOLUTE CARNAGE Team,

All I can say is I absolutely love the writing of Donny Cates. It seems everything he touches turns to gold--from "Thanos Wins" to COSMIC GHOST RIDER and now this ABSOLUTE CARNAGE event, it's all absolutely amazing. As someone who hasn't completely kept up to date on everything going on with VENOM, I was immediately hyped by the opening pages promptly telling the reader what's up with Knull, the symbiotes and the threat of Carnage coming RIGHT NOW!

I'm hooked, I'm in, I'm ready to read more and more of this event and anything else Cates and the team delivers.

Carnage rules!
Kazden R.

Thanks for reading and for writing, Kazden! I'd DEFINITELY recommend going back and catching up on VENOM, especially if you dug what's going down in ABSOLUTE CARNAGE. Not only do those past issues of VENOM set the stage for everything that's unfolding in the event, but we were also lucky enough to be joined by a group of incredibly talented collaborators who contributed to the book while Donny and Ryan were working on ABSOLUTE CARNAGE #1.

Joshua Cassara came aboard and illustrated a portion of VENOM #11 and the entirety of VENOM #12--perhaps the two most important issues of Donny's run so far. If you haven't read them, you DEFINITELY should. Not only are they great comics, but they also set the stage for a big reveal in the event.

For our three WAR OF THE REALMS tie-ins, Cullen Bunn returned to the webs, joined by his unparalleled VENOMVERSE and VENOMIZED collaborators, Iban Coello and Andres Mossa!

And with VENOM #16, Donny returned to writing the series with a one-and-done adventure that pits Venom against one of his most meaningful foes in a deeply twisted way. With art by Juan Gedeon and SPECTACULAR colors by Jesus Aburtov, this issue is a special one!

ITEM: Speaking of being joined by collaborators, the ABSOLUTE CARNAGE family was joined by some of the best in the biz for this week's issues--ABSOLUTE CARNAGE: SCREAM and ABSOLUTE CARNAGE: SYMBIOTE SPIDER-MAN!

I didn't have a chance to sing the praises of the SCREAM creative team in the first issue's column, and I refuse to let another opportunity to do so pass me by!

After WAR OF THE REALMS, Cullen dove right into this miniseries--and trust me when I say he did his homework. He pored over every nook and cranny of the Scream symbiote's past--and even some of Venom's too!--and I couldn't be more excited about the results.

...UNTIL I SAW PAGES FROM GERARDO SANDOVAL, THAT IS! Naturally, we knew the story was great after reading Cullen's scripts, but there's nothing like getting a front-row seat to a comic book getting illustrated, especially by someone as talented as Gerardo! It's so great to have him back in the VENOM family!

BUT THAT'S NOT ALL! Also this week, we have ABSOLUTE CARNAGE: SYMBIOTE SPIDER-MAN #1, a gut-wrenching tale of one of the earliest hosts of the Venom symbiote who WASN'T Peter Parker!

Brought to you by Peter David and Francesco Mobili, this one-shot is a love letter to the symbiote's first appearances and tells a brand-new tale from a special old piece of continuity as only the maestros at Marvel can!

(And if you haven't checked out SYMBIOTE SPIDER-MAN, you SHOULD! It's chock-full of symbiote goodness, and Mysterio even gets a symbiote makeover!)

((Relax, you maniacs, it never touched his skin and only bonded to his SUIT. He doesn't have a codex.))

That's all the space we've got for this one, Venomaniacs! Be back here in ONE WEEK for VENOM #18, ABSOLUTE CARNAGE VS. DEADPOOL #2 and ABSOLUTE CARNAGE: SYMBIOTE OF VENGEANCE!

**Stay Sharp!
Devin
@edevinlewis**

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